

### Travel Seminar to London & Paris with Skidmore Faculty

For information on cost and travel logistics, contact Lisa Hobbs in OCSE at [lhobbs@skidmore.edu](mailto:lhobbs@skidmore.edu) or 580-5355. For course content and academic requirements contact Professor Bender at 580-5420 [sbender@skidmore.edu](mailto:sbender@skidmore.edu) or Professor Barnes at 580-5153 [abarnes@skidmore.edu](mailto:abarnes@skidmore.edu).

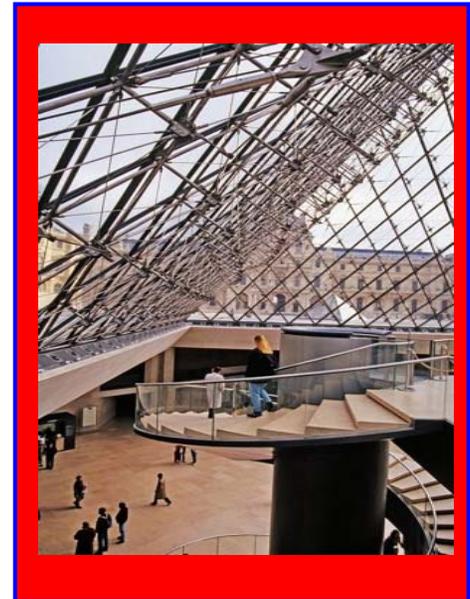


**"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one corner of the earth all one's lifetime."** Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad* (1869) Chapter LXII



## Skidmore College

### Museums from the Outside In: What can we learn from London and Paris Museums?



**TX 200B: FACULTY-LED TRAVEL SEMINAR  
TO LONDON, ENGLAND & PARIS, FRANCE**

**December 28, 2009 to January 15, 2010**

#### FACULTY

**PROFESSOR SUSAN BENDER**  
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**PROFESSOR ALISON BARNES**  
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## Travel Seminar to London & Paris

**MUSEUMS FROM THE OUTSIDE IN** is a two-credit travel seminar (TX200) in which students will engage in a critical cultural study of museums in London and Paris. **The course will be designated as a Spring 2010 course. However accepted students will be admitted in Spring 2009 and register in Fall 2009.**

The course will provide students with a foundational knowledge of how to “read” museums as culturally constructed phenomena by utilizing selected museums in each city. Students will explore how particular forms of a museum’s construction and design both flow from and contribute to national identity formations.

The course will require that students record their experiences in a blog that incorporates writing, visuals, and hyperlinks to respond to theoretical readings and structured on-site museum exercises. These blogs, along with class discussions, will lead to a final essay.

## Why London and Paris?

The cities of London and Paris have fostered one of the longest and richest traditions of museums as civic institutions. The Louvre and the British Museum both originated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and are among the first public museums in Europe. Since then each capital city has self-consciously displayed central elements of its nation’s civic culture through the artful display of objects in its burgeoning museum landscape. Now these capitals support in excess of 100 museums each. Both the heritage and multiplicity of museums in these two cities make them ideal centers to explore the various ways in which museums as institutions can flow from and contribute to national identity formations.

## Course Schedule

The instructors will schedule two meetings on Skidmore’s campus in Fall '09 to prepare for the on-site projects and discuss the logistics and the code of conduct for the travel experience. There will be one follow-up meeting upon returning from London and Paris (dates to be determined).

## Preliminary Travel Schedule

Subject to change

December 28: Flight NYC to London, England

December 29: Arrive in London. Welcome Dinner.

December 30: Orientation “Why do cultures make museums and how do museums shape cultures?” Visit British Museum

December 31: “What are the meanings of museums’ collections?” Visit Museum of London

January 1: Day off for exploring London

January 2: “Architecture and meaning: A comparison of the British Museum and the Museum of London”

January 3: “Space, experience and meaning: how does the museum structure space?” Visit British Museum. High Tea in the museum restaurant

January 4: “How do exhibits tell stories?” Visit Museum of London.

January 5: “A closer look: collections, objects and meanings.” Students select a museum to visit.

January 6: How do museums capture and create memories? Visit Imperial War Museum

January 7: “How do museums entangle identities?” Visit Imperial War Museum

January 8: Travel to Paris, France

January 9: Can we compare the Louvre with the British Museum? Visit the Louvre

January 10: “Collections & meaning: a comparison of the Museum of London and the Musée Carnavalet” Visit the Musée Carnavalet

January 11 Representations of history and identity: a comparison of the Imperial War Museum and in Les Invalides & Musée de l’Armée” Visit Invalides & Musée de l’Armée

January 12 & 13: Revisit museums as appropriate/ free time

January 14: Blog presentation. Farewell dinner.

January 15: Flight to NYC

## Skidmore Faculty

**SUSAN BENDER** is a Professor of Anthropology, with a specialization in archaeology. Her initial interests in museums stemmed from questioning how the past is represented to museum goers, particularly those pasts that relate to people without a written history. Since then she has increasingly used museum exhibits as a source for critical thinking exercises with her students and has become deeply engaged with research into the pedagogical potential of museums in a liberal arts education. She teaches courses on a variety of topics in archaeology, including gender, laboratory and field research, and the archaeologies of North and Central America.

**ALISON BARNES** is a Visiting Assistant Professor of English and Environmental Studies and Faculty Liaison to the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery. She received an MFA in poetry from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and an MFA in photography from Syracuse University. Her interdisciplinary background informs her current research into the pedagogical potential of museums in a liberal arts education. She teaches museum-based writing classes at Skidmore and works with faculty from across the disciplines to deepen curricular engagement with the museum.

## Anticipated Costs

The anticipated fee for the travel seminar to London and Paris is \$4,000 (may fluctuate). This includes roundtrip airfare (departing from New York City), all onsite ground transportation, onsite accommodations with double occupancy, 2 meals a day, medical insurance, entrance and performance fees, local guides, cultural excursions, Skidmore faculty onsite, and the support of Skidmore’s OCSE. The fee does not include transportation to and from NYC nor personal expenses.

## Application

Applications are available from Professor Bender in Tisch 225, Professor Barnes in PMH 423 or in OCSE – Starbuck 202 and OCSE’s webpage. Application Deadline is **May 1, 2009**. Applicants are required to submit a \$250 non-refundable deposit at time of application to hold their space on the program. (100% refundable if not accepted to program). This deposit will be applied to program fee.